3/5/03
Document 2
What is the CATS Online Assessment and How Does it Work?

The CATS Online Assessment is an interactive website that has been created with the spring 2003 KCCT, Form 1A (Form 1 for grade 12), in an "accessible" digital format. The questions and student expectations for this online assessment are the same as for all other students taking the test with pencil and paper. It is an "accessible" online assessment, because the text has been formatted for computerized reading by students, using their textreader (e.g., Wordsmith, Read & Write, eReader) or screenreader (i.e., JAWS) software. The students will use their mouse or keyboard to select the text they need help in reading, and the computer will provide the audio (via earphones). This way, the students can control navigation of the test questions and independently read and/ or re-read at their own pace anything they cannot read without supports. Use of this accommodation though, still requires adult presence in the event a student has a need for support in use of the technology.
NOTE: Both students and support staff must have sufficient experience in classroom and online use of textreader or screenreader technology before attempting to use this means of participation in the KCCT. Supported software includes: Read and Write (4, 5, 6, or Gold), JAWS 3.7, eReader 2.0, or ZoomText. Macintosh platform is not supported for 2003 due to compatibility issues yet to be resolved.

Eligible Students
Many Kentucky students with disabilities have required support from "human readers" as an accommodation to participate in the Kentucky Core Content Assessment (KCCT). Now, as a result of technology advances, a number of these students have begun using "text-to-speech" software (i.e., textreader or screenreader) to allow them to independently read materials in the classroom using computers. Those students who have primarily replaced the need for human reading supports with technology (i.e., textreader or screenreader) in the classroom setting, can consider the option of using this same technology to independently read the KCCT online in spring of 2003.
The students' teachers will need to be able to verify that this technology support is used by the students on a routine basis as their consistent means of accessing printed material and that this accommodation is listed in each student's Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan. This process also assumes that the student's instructional materials are being converted and or obtained in an accessible digital format to allow the student to have the ability to access his or her instructional materials on the computer.
In summary, **all three** of the following CATS Online Assessment Eligibility Criteria must be met to consider students for participation:

1. Student has an Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan that specifies the need for a "reader" as a classroom instructional and assessment accommodation, (i.e., student's IEP includes specific goals and objectives and specially designed

instruction related to reading or describes assistive technology necessary for the student to access, be involved in, and progress in the general curriculum) and;

2. Student routinely requires and uses (e.g., daily to weekly) textreader or screenreader technology to access printed materials in classroom instruction and assessment, and;

3. Student has entered and used the CATS Online Practice Area to develop familiarity with online assessment operations and use of his or her hardware and software. (NOTE: Students who participated in the Fall Pilot will still be required to enter and use the Practice Area before gaining access to the KCCT.)

NOTE: Use of the CATS Online Assessment accommodation is only to be used by students who meet the eligibility criteria. Students who prefer to use adult support to "read" the KCCT as specified in their IEP will continue with this accommodation and **will not** be expected to utilize the CATS Online Assessment Tool.

CATS Online Practice Area

Taking a test online is not the same as taking a test with pencil and paper. It requires practice to allow students to know how to navigate between questions, how to use their text or screenreader to select and read the test, etc. Therefore, it is required that each student has experience with the format and operation of the CATS Online Assessment before he/she tries to take the real test in this format. A CATS Online Practice Area is set up just for this purpose, where the student can practice using selected questions from the 1999 Released CATS test items. No student will be allowed to enter the spring 2003 KCCT Online Assessment unless it is verified that he or she has spent time in the CATS Online Practice Area. It is strongly recommended that both staff and students spend time in this practice area until **both** are comfortable with how to navigate pages and understand how to use their textreader or screenreader software to read and answer both multiple choice and open response questions. Our experience has found that students should spend at least 20-30 minutes in the Practice Area to become thoroughly familiar with these issues. For more information on use of the Practice Area, see What Steps Must Teachers Follow in Preparation for CATS Online?

Previewing Practice Area (DEMO ONLY)
(NOTE- Students entering the Practice Area by using the student logins below will not result in the required tracking of Student Practice as needed to access the KCCT- Student practice must occur through creating student accounts as described in How does a District register for the online assessment?)

To see an example of what the assessment will look like for students, go to http://aat.ecollege.com/ . At the login screen, type in one of the following Login IDs:

Grade	Login ID
4	g04st2161
5	g05st9398
7	g07st9567
8	g08st4057
10	g10st7314
11	g11st6974
12	g12st1215

The sample grades are set up to reflect a variety of student <u>accommodation profiles</u>. This will help teachers see different views prior to setting individual profiles when entering student users for the real test. Accommodation profiles are set by the teacher based on individual student need consistent with IEPs or 504 Plans.